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ABSTRACT

This document describes Tennessee's 1993 Master Plan for education and the state's progress toward achieving eight of its key goals. Goals are outlined for achieving results in the areas of early childhood education, primary and middle grades education, high school education, technology, professional development and teacher education, accountability, school leadership and school-based decision making, and funding. Following the mission and vision statements and overview, eight sections describe each goal, outline the strategies to achieve that goal, and identify progress indicators. (LMI)

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ED 366 042

MASTER PLAN
FOR
TENNESSEE SCHOOLS
1993

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MASTER PLAN

FOR

TENNESSEE SCHOOLS

Preparing for the Twenty–First Century

1993

TENNESSEE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Adopted
November 1992

Master Plan For Tennessee Schools
Preparing for the Twenty-First Century

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Mission

To ensure that Tennessee schools are among the best in the nation.

VISION OF THE 21st CENTURY SCHOOL

At the very heart of the education enterprise is the relationship between teacher and student. We envision teachers communicating high expectations to all students, while guiding them in learning independently and working cooperatively. Teachers will literally expect success for all students.

Schools will develop students' capabilities to use communications and mathematics skills throughout their lives; to apply concepts from the humanities, the arts, mathematics, the sciences, and social studies; to adapt to changing environments; to understand the values upon which our country was founded; and to accept the responsibilities of good citizenship.

The primary grades schools will nurture children's innate curiosity while engaging them in developing communications, science, and mathematics skills. The middle grades will provide an opportunity for students to extend their knowledge of the world and become active problem solvers. The high school experience will be a bridge rather than a termination point, an opportunity to establish real competency in areas essential for success in college and advanced technical education.

Teachers and students will be supported by a new kind of classroom, a learning environment organized to facilitate cooperation among teachers and equipped with state-of-the-art technology that will change the way students learn and the way teachers teach. Technology will not be an end in itself, but a means to bring the world to the classroom and to target individual interests and needs. Sufficient resources will exist for school personnel to do the job well. Sustained, adequate funding mechanisms will allow educators to concentrate on the education of their students.

Teachers and principals will operate in a professional working environment, with ample opportunities for mutual support and professional development. Crucial decisions about teaching and learning will be made close to the focus of the action in the classroom and school. Each school's faculty will work together in planning and deciding instructional strategies, programs, and the use of resources which affect both student and teacher learning.

Tennessee's 21st century schools will expect and support active parent involvement in the education of their children. New technologies and procedures will allow and encourage this partnership. Schools will actively seek parents to be educational partners.

Finally, schools will be a place children, parents, and teachers enjoy. Their pleasure will come from the challenge, the opportunity to learn, the relationship with other concerned and capable individuals, and the joy of achievement.

OVERVIEW

Tennessee has reached a milestone in education reform. The **Education Improvement Act (EIA)** provides for establishing a full tool box of resources for the 21st century classroom, a rational and accountable system of school governance, and a funding formula, the **Basic Education Program (BEP)**, to provide adequate and equitable support for reform activities. Schools are beginning to reduce class size, use new technology, and apply innovative teaching strategies.

As a result of the legislation, many of the strategies in the 1992 Master Plan have been accomplished. The **1993 Master Plan** focuses on the remaining issues of highest priority. This plan is not a comprehensive recounting of all of the activities underway. Instead, it focuses on eight goals and the activities needed to achieve these goals. Progress indicators are identified for each goal. The goals reflect the key result areas in which we must make progress if we are to achieve the education reform envisioned in the EIA.

We are making progress. Adoption of the EIA is a significant accomplishment in this effort. Innovations in school programs being made during this school year are apparent and will have a positive effect on student performance.

As a result of the EIA, the structure needed for improvement is in place. Yet, the goals of the Master Plan are tied to a funding formula specifically designed to provide the necessary level of resources, a formula which is not yet fully funded. So, while the structure for full implementation of the Master Plan is in place, necessary funding for full implementation is not available. The funding required to implement this Master Plan is spelled out in the Board's **Funding Needs Report**.

Across the state, people understand that education is critical to Tennessee's future quality of life and economic viability. Competitiveness will be the byword for the 21st century, a competitiveness that extends throughout the world. Either we create schools to go forward into the next century, or we consign future generations to be outside the economic, civic and cultural mainstream. The Master Plan informs people of the Board's intentions and defines an environment in which local school systems can work for improvement. The State Board of Education accepts its responsibilities in this effort and welcomes the opportunity to work with others in achieving the goals in this Master Plan.

Goals For The Eight Key Result Areas

Early Childhood Education

Goal: All children will begin school ready to learn.

Primary and Middle Grades Education

Goal: All children will complete the primary grades able to read, write, and solve mathematical problems effectively and will complete the middle grades able to learn independently and demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter.

High School Education

Goal: At least 90 percent of all students will complete high school and will be prepared for college-level work, post-secondary technical education, or employment.

Technology

Goal: State-of-the-art technology will be used to transform instruction and learning in all schools, provide professional development, manage schools and school systems, and link all schools in a statewide information network.

Professional Development and Teacher Education

Goal: The teaching profession will attract and retain well qualified individuals who complete strong professional preparation programs and continue to grow professionally.

Accountability

Goal: State and local education policies will be focused on results; Tennessee will have assessment and management information systems that provide information on students, schools, and school systems to improve learning and assist policy making.

School Leadership and School-Based Decision

Goal: Leaders of schools and school systems will be well prepared and will accept responsibility for improved performance of schools and school systems.

Funding

Goal: The Basic Education Program will be fully funded to ensure adequate and equitable support for Tennessee schools.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Goal: All children will begin school ready to learn.

Children come to school from environmental backgrounds that vary widely and that affect their readiness to learn. While federally funded Head Start programs currently serve about 40% of eligible four-year olds and some local school systems provide locally funded programs, more than half of children at risk are not served. Continued federal effort to expand the Head Start program is projected.

Strategies:

- Improve the connection between expanding federal Head Start programs and public school primary grades programs.
- Encourage the development of comprehensive early childhood education programs in community and school settings to four year old children who are at risk and to their parents using federal Chapter I and other resources. Ensure that these programs are developmentally appropriate and are consistent with the Board's new Early Childhood Education and Parent Involvement Policy.
- Promote the development of family resource centers serving pre-school and school age children and their families. Use Basic Education Program (BEP) resources and coordinate efforts with other agencies.

Progress Indicators:

- Number and percentage of four-year-old children who are at risk and who are served by federal and state comprehensive early childhood programs.
- Number of state approved family resource centers in operation.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

PRIMARY AND MIDDLE GRADES EDUCATION

Goal: All children will complete the primary grades able to read, write, and solve mathematical problems effectively and will complete the middle grades able to learn independently and demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter.

While on average Tennessee students score at or above the national average on the norm referenced portion of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP), schools are not meeting the needs of some of the most vulnerable students. Too many students in middle grades are not mastering the Tennessee curriculum as measured by the criterion referenced portion of the TCAP and too many students are retained in first, seventh and eighth grades. Retention is associated with dropping out of school.

Strategies:

- Ensure that programs in kindergarten through grade three are developmentally appropriate.
- Promote the use of active learning strategies such as literature-based language arts instruction and hands-on math and science instruction by providing materials and professional development.
- Promote the following innovations through professional development: non-graded or continuous progress classrooms in primary grades, integrated curriculum, flexible staffing arrangements, and instructional strategies such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning.
- Reduce class size in grades kindergarten through three in elementary schools with high concentrations of children from low socioeconomic environments, with federal Chapter I funds and state funds. Maximize the potential of smaller classes by using teaching strategies that have been demonstrated to be effective with at-risk students.
- Promote the implementation of the middle schools concept through staff development. Promote the following innovations: develop schools within schools where teachers and students function as teams and use practices such as flexible scheduling and cooperative learning.
- Implement the Board's new Mathematics Policy. Promote instructional practices in math and science based on National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards and emerging national science standards emphasizing hands-on activities, work in small groups, problem solving approaches, and calculators and other technology.

- Ensure the achievement of all students with disabilities through the use of IEPs with continued emphasis on inclusion and placing students in the least restrictive environment. Modify teaching strategies to meet the needs of a wider range of students in the regular classroom. Provide relevant professional development for special education and regular classroom teachers.

- Use performance information from the state testing program to adjust instruction, minimize retentions in grade, and avoid student failure.

Progress Indicators:

- Student performance in grades 2-8 as measured by the TCAP.
- Student performance in grades 4 and 8 on the writing assessment.
- Student performance on other performance based assessment.
- Student promotion rate in grades K-8.
- Student attendance in grades K-6 and grades 7-8.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION

Goal: At least 90 percent of all students will complete high school and be prepared for college-level work, post-secondary technical education or employment.

Approximately 75% of the students complete high school or attain a GED by age 19. About half of the students entering public colleges and universities require remedial or developmental courses. ACT scores of high school seniors are slightly below the national average. Almost half of the high school graduates enrolled in vocational technical schools must participate in basic skills courses in order to be successful in their technical occupational programs.

Strategies:

- Restructure the high school curriculum so that all students learn a common set of competencies during their freshman and sophomore years.
- Provide a high school curriculum that addresses the academic subjects and competencies defined by The College Board, ensure that every high school offers the courses required for college admission to Tennessee's public institutions of higher education, and increase student participation in The College Board's Advanced Placement Program.
- Integrate a solid core of mathematics, sciences, and communications into the entire vocational curriculum and expand successful technology pilot courses. Provide laboratories and professional development.
- Strengthen math and science education by implementing the Board's new Mathematics Policy. Require all students to complete three years of mathematics and to achieve at least one of the following: Algebra I, Math for Technology II, or the equivalent in an integrated curriculum. Promote instructional practices consistent with NCTM standards and emerging national science standards.
- Assist local school systems in developing comprehensive plans for reducing drop out rates including career awareness programs, apprenticeship and school-to-work transition programs, peer tutoring, programs to assist pregnant teenagers and teenage parents, drug prevention programs and adult high schools. Encourage local school systems to work with other community groups and agencies. Provide state funding for special initiatives. Evaluate their effectiveness and if they are effective, incorporate funds for drop out prevention into the BEP.
- Assist high schools in diagnosing the needs of sophomores and juniors to determine their college readiness by providing assessment instruments.

Provide state funds for local schools to administer either the P-ACT of the *American College Testing Program* or the PSAT of the Educational Testing Service to high school sophomores.

- Increase the number of persons who enroll in and complete the GED (General Education Development) program. Implement through adult high schools and through year-round literacy programs.

Progress Indicators:

- Performance of 10th grade students on TCAP.
- Performance of 11th grade students on the writing assessment.
- Performance of 12th grade students on a national examination system to be developed in English, mathematics, science, history and geography.
- Performance of 12th grade students on a college readiness and/or a work readiness assessment.
- Percentage of students who enter colleges, universities, and post-secondary technical institutions, public and private.
- Percentage of students who require remedial or developmental courses at public colleges and universities and post-secondary technical institutions.
- Number of students completing advanced placement courses and number of students scoring 3 or above on advanced placement examinations.
- Performance on the Tennessee Proficiency Test requirement.
- Graduation (school completion) rate including individuals who receive a regular diploma, honors diploma, special education diploma, or high school certificate in June or August graduations; individuals 19 years old and under who receive a high school diploma by completing an adult high school program; and individuals 19 years old and under who receive a GED credential.
- Student attendance in grades 9-12.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

TECHNOLOGY

Goal: State-of-the-art technology will be used to transform instruction and learning in all schools, provide professional development, manage schools and school systems, and link all schools in a statewide information network.

Some schools have sophisticated instructional programs using computer applications; selected classrooms have 21st century classroom technology; and most schools have limited computer capabilities to assist in managing information. A plan for a management information system has been adopted, but the system is not yet in place.

Strategies:

- Implement the 21st Century Classroom technology plan to transform instruction and learning: establish pilot schools to showcase instructional technology, develop classroom models, provide training for teachers and provide equipment.
- Implement the Tennessee Education Network in order to collect information needed to facilitate the formulation of education policy, improve the management of classrooms, schools and school systems, and meet student needs.
- Expand the use of technology for continuing professional development.
- Develop cooperative efforts with institutions of higher education, public television, business and industry to undertake research and development and to produce equipment and programs using new technologies for instruction, assessment, professional development, and management.

Progress Indicators:

- Ratio of computers to students.
- Number of classrooms equipped with 21st century classroom technology.
- Growth in technology applications such as Jasper, school level networks, homework hotlines and distance learning.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Goal: The teaching profession will attract and retain well qualified individuals who complete strong professional preparation programs and continue to grow professionally.

Rigorous new teacher education programs are attracting more and better students. Teacher education programs attract students with average ACT scores that are slightly higher than the average for all students entering state colleges and universities. While the number of graduates is increasing, the number of minority teacher candidates remains too low. The rate of teacher turnover in Tennessee is 7-9%, about the same as national estimates.

Strategies:

- Implement the Board's new Professional Development Policy in order to address the goals of the Education Improvement Act.

  a. Focus professional development at the school level, engaging principals and teachers in continuous learning and improvement in order to enhance learning of their students.

  b. Use available resources including personnel, in-service days, classroom-related travel, and substitute teachers to meet local school improvement and professional development objectives.

  c. Use career ladder extended contract resources to provide professional development linked to identified student needs.

  d. Continue successful academies for teachers and administrators.

- Provide beginning teacher salaries and average teacher salaries that are nationally competitive.

- Continue implementation of the new Teacher Education Policy including licensure standards and program approval procedures based in part on the performance of teacher candidates and beginning teachers in the classroom.

- Implement induction programs for teacher candidates and beginning teachers. Use career ladder extended contract resources to provide mentoring for teacher candidates and beginning teachers. Evaluate the programs to determine which are most effective in preparing teachers.

- Increase the number of well qualified candidates preparing to become teachers, with particular emphasis on minority teachers. Expand loan/scholarship programs for prospective teachers.

- Create a statewide registry of applicants for teaching and administrative positions to assist local school systems in identifying prospective qualified teachers and school leaders.

- Encourage highly qualified persons with college degrees to become licensed teachers through alternative preparation for licensure.

Progress Indicators:

- Rate of participation of teachers in professional development activities.

- ACT and grade point average of persons entering teacher education programs.

- Results on national assessments of teacher candidates.

- Number of persons who become licensed as teachers compared to number of newly hired teachers.

- Proportion of minorities in the teaching profession.

- Performance of teacher candidates and beginning teachers in the classroom.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal: State and local education policies will focus on results. To improve learning and assist policy making, Tennessee will have assessment and management information systems that provide information on students, schools, and school systems.

The Education Improvement Act specifies accountability procedures. The work required to implement value added assessment is on schedule. Performance goals for school systems have been adopted by the State Board of Education. A plan for a management information system has been developed. The State Board of Education has completed a comprehensive revision of its rules to give local school systems greater flexibility in decision making. Further legislative action is needed to eliminate obsolete laws.

Strategies:

- Continue the elimination of unnecessary state laws, State Board of Education rules and regulations, and State Department of Education procedures and guidelines.

- Establish and monitor performance expectations for school systems and schools. Establish standards for identification of school systems and schools to be placed on probation. Establish standards for performance funding awards.

- Maintain and revise a statewide assessment program comprised of nationally normed instruments, criterion referenced instruments, and performance based assessment including writing assessment and problem solving.

  a. Revise the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) Achievement Test to include performance based components and to reflect National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards and emerging national standards in other subject areas. Assess problem solving and writing as well as basic skills.

  b. Revise the TCAP Proficiency Test to require higher levels of achievement in mathematics and language arts and to reflect NCTM standards, including the use of calculators on components of the test.

  c. Administer an exit examination to all seniors: administer a work readiness assessment for non-college bound students or a college entrance examination for college bound students.

- Develop and maintain the value-added assessment system to determine the progress made by students, schools, and school systems.

- Annually communicate information to educators and others about the performance of school systems and schools, including student test results, attendance rates, high school completion rates, promotion rates, and local financial contribution to education.

- Implement the Tennessee Education Network management information system in order to improve management of local school systems, improve communication between school systems and the state, and make accessible to the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education information needed for resource deployment and policy making.

Progress Indicators:

- Progress in developing performance assessment.

- Progress in implementing the Tennessee Education Network.

- Adequacy of information base for use by schools and state policymakers.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL-BASED DECISION MAKING

Goal: Leaders of schools and school systems will be well prepared and will accept responsibility for improved performance of schools and school systems.

Sweeping changes in school governance were provided by the Education Improvement Act. School boards will be elected, superintendents will be appointed, principals will have new responsibilities and will serve under performance contracts. School-based decision making has been authorized.

Strategies:

- Implement the Board's new Policy for the Principal by strengthening pre-service preparation, assessing beginning principals, implementing performance contracts and providing professional development opportunities for principals.
- Continue to provide high quality professional development opportunities for superintendents through the Tennessee Executive Development Program. Continue to provide local school board members annual training opportunities of high quality through the School Board Member Training Academy.
- Encourage school systems to implement school-based decision making. Promote professional development opportunities for school boards, superintendents, supervisors, principals, teachers, students, parents and community leaders.
- Encourage local schools to develop innovative school improvement programs and adjust rules and procedures as needed to implement such programs.

Progress Indicators:

- Rate of participation of principals, supervisors, superintendents and school board members in professional development activities and participant satisfaction regarding professional development programs.
- Percentage of schools implementing school-based decision making and satisfaction levels of school personnel and community leaders.
- Performance of schools and school systems as measured by the performance goals adopted by the State Board of Education.

GOALS FOR THE EIGHT KEY RESULT AREAS

FUNDING

Goal: The Basic Education Program will be fully funded to ensure adequate and equitable support for Tennessee schools.

The Basic Education Program funding formula, adopted as part of the Education Improvement Act, will provide a rational funding mechanism. However, the Basic Education Program formula has been only partially funded.

Strategies:

- Fully fund the Basic Education Program formula to provide all schools with essential components including personnel, reduction in class size, technology, textbooks, materials, transportation and capital expenditures. Maintain full funding of the BEP formula over time, including increased costs identified by annual component reviews and cost updates.
- Establish a gifts campaign for public schools. Establish partnerships with business and industry to provide funds for specific purposes.

Progress Indicators:

- Funding level of the Basic Education Program.
- Performance of schools and school systems as measured by the performance goals adopted by the State Board of Education.

State Board of Education Authorization No. 331653. 714 copies. This public documment was promulgated at a cost of $.63 per copy. December 1992.